THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 7th December 1954.

The House met in the Assembly Chamber, Government Estate, Mount Road, at eleven of the clock, Mr. Speaker (THE HON. SRI J. SIVASHANMUGAM PILLAI) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

New method of voting in the District Board elections.

* 272 *Q*.—SRI K. P. GOPALAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether any difficulties of the voters in observing the new method of voting in the recent District Board elections have come to the notice of Government;

(*b*) whether the Government have received any reports from the district officials concerning these matters; and

(*c*) if so, whether the Government will be pleased to place on the table of the House copies of the same?

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" (*a*) *to* (*c*) No, Sir."

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" Are the Government aware of the fact that during the last District Board elections, when the votes were being counted, it was found that some unknown persons polled more number of votes called ' invalid votes ' than the actual voters in the constituency? In view of the experience I have just mentioned, will the Government adopt the system which now obtains in the case of the General Elections to the Parliament and the State Legislatures? "

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" The Government are not aware of these. But if any specific instances are brought to their notice, they will be looked into."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Is the Hon. the Minister aware of the fact that due to the difficulties experienced in marking the ballot papers properly, the Hon. the Chief Minister issued a statement that the present system was not workable and that he was going to drop it in the next elections? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I am not aware of any such statement issued by the Chief Minister. This system of voting was only an experiment and certainly we will review the entire position and if necessary make the necessary changes in the system."

[7th December 1954

SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI :—" Have the Government received any representation from the Kozhikode Municipality regarding this system of voting and will the Government assure us that they will not adopt this in the ensuing Municipal elections? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" This has nothing to do with the municipal elections at all. This was with reference to District Board elections and Government will certainly review the whole situation."

SRI S. SWAYAMPRAKASAM :—" Is it not a fact that the Government have information that the voters at the last elections to the District Boards, instead of marking on the ballot papers, marked their choice of the candidates on the posters pasted on the walls for the guidance of voters? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" There have been a certain number of invalid votes due to ignorance on the part of voters. All these things will be considered."

SRI M. PALANIYANDI :—" Sir, என்னுடைய கேள்வியை நண்பர் சுயம்பிரகாசம் அவர்கள் கேட்டுவிட்டார். போலிங் அறையில் வைத்திருக்கக்கூடிய அட்டைப்படங்களின் மேல் ஆயிரக்கணக்கான ஓட்டுகள் போடப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன. ஆகவே அதைத் தடுப்பதற்கான வழியைச் சர்க்கார் செய்வார்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" There is no use of repeating all these irregularities. We will call for a report from all the officers concerned and will take into account every aspect of the complaint."

SRI P. CHELLATHURAI :—" சிற்சில இடங்களில் தேர்தலுக்குப் போட்டி யிட்டவர்களுக்கு கிடைத்த ஓட்டுக்களைக் காட்டிலும், அதிகப்படியான ஓட்டுக்கள் செல்லுபடியாகாமல் போயின என்பது மந்திரி அவர்களுக்குத் தெரியுமா ? "

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" Statistics relating to the results of voting show that out of nearly 64 lakhs of votes, about 5½ lakhs were declared invalid and the percentage works out to 8·6. This can by no means be considered high."

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" When was this method of voting decided upon—by the Rajaji Ministry or by the Kamaraj Ministry? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" This proposal was under consideration during Rajaji's regime and a decision was taken later on."

SRI T. ANANTA PAI :—" In the last municipal elections, it was found that in certain places ballot papers were brought out and sold but this irregularity was got over in this election by resorting to the new method. As a result, there were very few such cases of abuse this time. In view of this experience will the Government seriously try to improve upon the existing system itself so that all the present difficulties might be overcome? "

7th December 1954]

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" In order to overcome the irregularities pointed out by the hon. Member, we experimented with the system we adopted at the last District Board elections. But this system is also defective in certain respects because voters are not voting properly, with the result a considerable number of votes have become invalid. We will examine the whole position and try to arrive at a solution which will avoid all the irregularities pointed out by hon. Members and at the same time enable voters to vote properly."

SRI N. RAMAKRISHNA AYYAR :—" What has been the educative value of this type of voting? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" As far as the educative value is concerned, one lesson that we have learnt is that our voters do not know how to vote whether it is the existing system of voting or voting with symbols. We are considering the question as to how the system could be made simpler and better."

SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" One thing has become very clear from the present questions and that is, there should be a review of the present system and some changes should be introduced. Since administrative memory may be very short and a little dim also and since all the material now available may not be available at the time when the question is taken up for thorough examination, will the Government give an assurance that they will give necessary instructions to the officers concerned to collect all the data available in this connection so that the material may be useful at the time the question is reviewed? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I may tell the hon. Member that instructions have already been issued."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—" புதிய முறையில் வோட்டு செய்யவேண்டு 11-10 a.m.
மென்ற சட்டம் சென்ற ஜில்லாபோர்டு தேர்தல் ஆரம்பிப்பதற்கு ஒரு சில நாட்களுக்கு முன்புதான் நிறைவேற்றப்பட்டது. அதேபோல் சர்க்கார் இந்த விஷயத்தை பரிசீலிக்கச்செய்து மாற்றுவதற்கான ஏற்பாடுகள் செய்வதற்குமுன் அடுத்த ஜில்லா போர்டு தேர்தலே வந்துவிடும்போலிருக்கிறது. ஆகையால் இதை உடனடியாகப் பரிசீலனை செய்வதற்கு முயற்சி எடுப்பார்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" The hon. Member's memory is a little bit short. This was not introduced just before the District Board elections. This system was there even during elections to major panchayats. There was, therefore, nothing new introduced in the system for District Board elections alone."

Development of the Malnad area.

* 88 [a] *Q.*—SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(*a*) the area included in the Malnad Development Scheme;

---

[a] Postponed from the list of questions for 6th December 1954.